PREFÁCIO AO CATÁLOGO DO SALON DE LA ROSE † CROIX, 1892.

SAR JOSEPHIN MERODACK PELADAN

(Tradução do inglês de J. Souza)

“Artista, tu és padre! A arte é o grande mistério, e quando teu esforço alcança a mais elevada realização, um raio do divino desce como sobre um altar. Oh real presença da Divindade, resplandecente sob estes nomes supremos, Vinci, Raphael, Michelangelo, Beethoven e Wagner!

“Artista, tu és rei! A arte é o verdeiro império! Quando tua mão desenha uma linha perfeita, os próprios querubins descem para nela se deleitarem, como num espelho.

“Desenho espiritual, a alma da linha, a forma do entendimento, tu dás corpo aos nossos sonhos: Samothrace e São João, Sistina e o Cenáculo, São Quen, Parsifal, a Nona Sinfonia, Notre Dame!

“Artista, tu és mágico! A arte é o grande milagre e prova a nossa imortalidade!

“Quem mais duvida? Giotto sentiu o estigma; a Virgem apareceu a Fra Angelico; e Rembrandt provou a Ressurreição de Lázaro,

“Resposta absoluta a todos os pedantes contestadores!

“Eles duvidam de Moisés: contemplem Michelangelo.

“Eles desprezam Jesus: contemplem Leonardo daVinci.

“Eles secularizam tudo; mas a arte, imóvel e sagrada, continua sua prece!

“Indescritível e serena sublimidade! o Santo Graal sempre brilhante, a um só tempo ostensório e relíquia, a auriflama não conquistada, toda poderosa Arte, a Arte-deus, de joelhos eu te adoro, último reflexo do alto sobre nossa mortalidade.

“Reis — sórdidos e debilitados, reduzidos a cidadãos — terminam morrendo sobre a calçada, nas cidades onde a raça deles reinou!

“Nobres exibem seu gorro do setembro da liberdade e lisonjeiam o povo; ou então, feito estúpidos, satisfazem-se com as corridas de cavalo.

“Os padres consentiram em novamente vestir o libré do homicida! onde, então, estão os excomungados? Acabou-se tudo. A decadência está sacudindo o edifício do latim e a Cruz não tem mais nele a espada dos Guise,[1] o rifle do Revolucionário. Chora, oh Gregório VII., o qual teria salvo a todos; chora desde o céu sobre a tua igreja encoberta; e tu, velho Dante, ergue-te de teu trono de glória e, Homero dos católicos, mistura tua ira com o desespero dos Buonarotti.

1 Família de duques católicos franceses dos séculos XVI e XVII, participante ativa na Guerra das Religiões contra os protestantes.

“Um fio de luz sacra aparece. Desde a cruz do sagrado sofrimento projeta-se em brilho uma flor. Oh, maravilha! Uma rosa surge e cresce, tentando abraçar em suas devotas folhas a cruz da salvação; e a cruz, em consolo, resplandece novamente. Jesus não amaldiçoou este mundo: Jesus recebe a adoração da Arte!

“Os primeiros Magi vieram ao divino Mestre: os últimos permanecem filhos dele.[2]

“O imponente entusiasmo do artista sobrevive à extinta piedade do passado. Infeliz espírito moderno! Sua blasfêmia não deve jamais destruir a fé nas obras. Você pode, algum dia, fechar as igrejas, mas — os museus? O Louvre manterá seus serviços mesmo após o Notre Dame ser profanado![3]

“Sim! Strauss negou, mas Parsifal afirmou! E o Arcanjo de Franck afoga com sua voz sublime os ímpios resmungos de Renan!

“A humanidade, oh cidadãos, irá sempre à missa quando Bach, Beethoven e Palestrina estiverem oficiando os padres! Vocês jamais farão do sublime órgão um ateu. Pobres modernos, vocês jamais vencerão! Pois São George, o eterno vingador, é Gênio; e a beleza será sempre Deus. Irmãos de todas as artes, aqui eu dou o grito de guerra. Formemos um exército sagrado pela salvação do ideal. Somos poucos contra todos; mas os anjos do Paraíso guiar-nos-ão rumo ao Mont-salvat.

“Nossa missão teve início no dia em que a blasfêmia tornou-se rainha. Deixem um cavalheirismo surgir, um que honre e sirva ao ideal. Deixem a rosa das formas e das cores tornar-se o admirável tabernáculo, e a cruz redentora encontrará lá o seu prazer.

“Oh tu, meu irmão, que hesita, não se engane e confunda a chama da fé com o choro do fanático.

“Aquela tão querida Igreja, a coisa mais nobre neste mundo, bane a rosa, achando que seu perfume é perigoso. Ao lado dela, nós decoramos o Templo do Belo; trabalhamos em meio aos ecos das suas preces, competidores mas não rivais, diferentes mas não diversos; pois o artista é um padre, um rei, um mágico! pois a arte é um mistério sagrado, o único verdadeiro império, o grande milagre!

“Um fio da luz sagrada aparece e some! Contemplem, desde a cruz da dor sagrada projeta-se em brilho uma rosa!”

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2 Alusão provável aos reis magos que visitaram Jesus assim de nascido.

3 Publicou-se este texto originalmente em 1892. Coincidência ou não, 127 anos depois (em 15 de abril de 2019), um incêndio destruiu grande parte da Catedral Notre Dame, enquanto o Museu do Louvre seguiu — e segue — funcionando sem eventualidades.

bricks of various colors in geometrical patterns and mosaic work would do much to give character to modern dwellings.

And what a variety of resources would be on hand simply by the application of local color to already existing architectural forms, for instance, by gilding the reliefs and coloring the background.

What beautiful combinations could be made with red, black and salmon colored bricks, pink, gray and white granite, or grey, blueish gray and dove colored marble?

The most elegant and easily attainable embellishment of plain walls would be perhaps the sgrafitto work, used for instance on the palace Guadagni in Florence. It would, naturally, be as easy to scrape ornaments through a grey surface coating on to a dark blue undercoating etc., as through a white surface on to a black ground as was customary in those times.

Dull colors without strong contrasts would naturally, be the easiest to combine, but a bold talent might unite the loudest, such as the primaries, into a harmonious whole.

The knowledge of the poetic value of color which gives to purple the character of dignity and to green the character of comfort, for example, will probably never play an important part in exterior polychromy, though it might be useful in giving character to a building, as for instance a sombre or dignified appearance to a prison or court house, and a gay and festive one to a theatre or music hall.

The right application of color however, would not merely be a matter of taste, but would also need a great deal of technical knowledge which could hardly be acquired without expensive experiments. Above all else the durability of colors, and their effect in various changes of light and weather would have to be tested, as it would of course be desirable to have the outside walls of our buildings remain as luminous and well preserved as those of the old Egyptian temples.

Let us make a beginning and find out what can be done.

Time will show whether my dream of a colossal temple, throning on some verdant hill, perhaps a Valhalla in which the busts of America's greatest men chiseled by the best American sculptors would repose in tranquil majesty, can be realized —: a palatial structure remarkable for its splendor and nobility of expression, worthy of America, rendered by unlimited means the most perfect of its kind, a combination of the beauties of all styles executed entirely in white marble without a flaw, with background and decorative details in red and black marble, profusely embellished with gold — in short a farewell to the architecture of the past, and a greeting to the architecture of the future.

The ART CRITIC offers a prize of $100 for the best water-color sketch of the facade of a Valhalla with the appliance of exterior polychromy as principal attraction (as mentioned above however without restriction to any particular colors) submitted by subscribers before the first of April. The prize will be awarded in the June issue of the magazine, and the design reproduced in one of the following numbers.

The Jury will consist of (three architects, two painters, one sculptor, and one author.)

C. HOWARD WALKER.
ROBERT D. ANDREWS.
H. LANGFORD WARREN.
MARCUS WATERMAN.
F. H. TOMPKINS.
MAX BACHMANN.
C. SADAKICHI HARTMANN.

PREFACE TO THE CATALOGUE OF THE SALON DE LA ROSE † CROIX, 1892.

"Artist, thou art priest! Art is the great mystery, and when thy effort reaches its highest achievement a ray of the divine descends as on an altar. O real presence of the Divinity, resplendent under these supreme names, Vinci, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Beethoven and Wagner!

"Artist, thou art king! Art is the true empire! When thy hand has drawn a perfect line, the cherubims themselves descend to delight themselves in it as in a mirror.

"Spiritual design, the soul's line, the form of the understanding, thou givest body to our dreams: Samothrace and St. John, Sistine and the Cenacolo, St. Quen, Parsifal, the Ninth Symphony, Notre Dame!

"Artist thou art magician! Art is the great miracle, and proves our immortality!

"Who doubts anymore? Giotto has felt the stigmata; the Virgin appeared to Fra Angelico; and Rembrandt has proved the Resurrection of Lazarus.

"Absolute answer to all pedantic disputants!

"They doubt Moses: behold Michael Angelo.*

"They despise Jesus: behold Leonardo da Vinci†

"They secularize everything; but art, immovable and sacred, continues her prayer!

"Unspeakable and serene sublimity! the Holy Grail ever shining, at once ostensory and relic, the unconquered oriflamme, all powerful Art the Art-god, I adore thee on my knees, the last reflection from on high upon our mortality.

"Kings sordid and enfeebled, reduced to citizens, end in dying on the pavement in the cities where their race has reigned!

"Nobles make show of their September liberty cap, and they flatter the people; or else stupidly content themselves with the horse races.

"The priests have consented to put on again the livery of the homicide! where then are the excommunicated? All is over. The decadence is shaking the Latin edifice and the Cross has no longer with it the sword of the Guise, the rifle of the Revolutionist. Weep, O Gregory VII., who would have saved all; weep from heaven over thy shadowed Church; and thou aged Dante, rise from thy throne of glory, and, Homer of Catholics, mingle thine anger with the despair of Buonarotti.

"One gleam of holy light appears. From the cross of holy suffering shines forth a flower. Oh, wonder! A rose springs up and grows, endeavoring to embrace in its pious leaves the cross of salvation; and the cross, in consolation, shines forth again. Jesus has not cursed this world: Jesus receives the adoration of Art!

"The first Magi came to the divine Master: the last remain his children.

"The august enthusiasm of the artist survives the extinct piety of the past. Unhappy modern spirit! Your blasphemy shall never efface the faith of works. You may some day close the churches, but—the museums? The Louvre will hold its service even after the Notre Dame is profaned!

"Yes! Strauss has denied, but Parsifal has affirmed! And the Archangel of Franck drowns with his sublime voice the impious mutterings of Renan!

"Humanity, O citizens, will always go to the mass when Bach, Beethoven and Palestrina shall be the officiating priests! You shall never make an atheist of the sublime organ. Poor moderns, you shall never win! For St. George, the eternal avenger, is Genius; and the beautiful will be always God. Brothers of all the arts, I here sound the war-cry. Let us form a holy army for the salvation of the ideal. We are few against all; but the angels ot Paradise will guide us towards Montsalvat.

"Our mission began the day that blasphemy became king. Let a chivalry arise that shall honor and serve the ideal. Let the rose of forms and colors become the admirable tabernacle, and the redeeming cross will find its pleasure there.

"O thou my brother who dost hesitate, do not mistake and confound the fire of the faith with the cry of the fanatie.

"That Church so dear, the only augest thing in this world, banishes the rose, thinking its perfume dangerous. Beside her we decorate the Temple of Beauty; we labor amid the echoes of her prayers, emulous but not rivals, different but not diverse; for the artist is a priest, a king, a magician! for art is a sacred mystery, the sole true empire, the great miracle!

"A gleam of holy light appears and vanishes! Behold, from the cross of pain shines forth the rose!"

"SAR JOSEPHIN MERODACK PELADAN."

A FEW WORDS ON CRITICISM.

The difference between oldfashioned criticism and modern criticism cannot be better defined than with a French example.

Francisque Sarcey stands for old fashioned criticism, which should have justly been buried fifty years ago, and really acts deceitfully in asserting that it is still alive, while Jules Lemaitre represents modern criticism, such as modern intellectuality and modern art demand.

If one is a good Philistine, who wants exhaustive and reliable information about the stage, acting and the drama, and naturally has not much time to devote to the study of such things; one must stick to Sarcey. He is an excellent pedagogue, his services are beyond price. He knows everything, and has a definite answer for every question. He has the whole of art and all its regulations at his finger's end, and can recite them like the catechism. One feels at once that Sarcey is in the profession, that he understands his business with all its tricks and illusions, and that he is a conscientious man who would never take an x for a u. At the first glance he recognizes what is honestly done, where there is anything wrong, and—presto change—his judgment is ready as to the value of the whole affair. It is very agreeable, of course, to have somebody on whom one can depend, particularly